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## CURRENT SUPPORT MEMORANDUM

RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION IN EAST SIBERIA, 1956-1970

OFFICE OF RESEARCH AND REPORTS

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

This report represents the immediate views of the originating intelligence components of the Office of Research and Reports. Comments are solicited.

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RAILROAD CONSTRUCTION IN EAST SIBERIA, 1956-1970

The pattern of plans for railroad construction in East Siberia indicates a growing awareness on the part of Soviet planners of the vital need for increased transportation facilities in this area. Construction of new east-west mainlines will apparently generally precede major industrial development in the area.

The original Sixth Five-Year Plan called for the construction of three railroads in East Siberia, Tayshet-Ust Kut, Stalinsk-Abakan, and Achinsk-Abalakovo. 1/ In December 1957 work was completed on the Stalinsk-Abakan line 2/ and in 1958 the Tayshet-Lena line was officially completed. 3/

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4/ This 412 mile line, running through some of the most difficult terrain in the USSR, will be the final link in the South Siberian mainline and will also provide an alternate route to the Trans-Siberian from Tayshet westward. Completion of the line is scheduled for 1963 5/ and it will be of importance to the planned Tayshet Metallurgical Combine as well as other industrial development around Tayshet. The Achinsk-Abalakovo railroad is being built very slowly since construction of the two projects which it is to serve has been postponed. Construction of this line has proceeded at the rate of eight miles per year for the past three years. 6/

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Two additional east-west lines have been proposed which would be of great importance to the long range development of the Irkutsk and Trans-Baykal regions of East Siberia. 7/ The first is a 660 mile line from Abakan to Slyudanka. This line would permit diversion of some of the transcontinental traffic from the Trans-Siberian mainline west of Irkutsk thereby freeing the Trans-Siberian to serve better the growing area of Irkutsk Oblast. The second of the proposed lines runs from Abalakovo through Boguchany to Ust Kut. The western section of the line would provide access to the Angara-Pit iron ore deposits and the site of the future Boguchany GES, while the line as a whole is the first section of a northern bypass around Lake Baykal. Both of these lines are getting increased attention in the USSR press and it is possible that the start of construction of one or both of these lines will take place in the 1959-1965 period. Completion of either line is not likely until the 1966-1970 period.

The final significant line scheduled for construction in East Siberia is the 440 mile Bam-Aldan railroad leading to the iron and coal deposits of the southern Yakut ASSR. 8/ Construction of the line is scheduled to begin in the early 1960's. 9/ Development of ferrous metallurgy east of Lake Baykal could not be started until completion of this line.

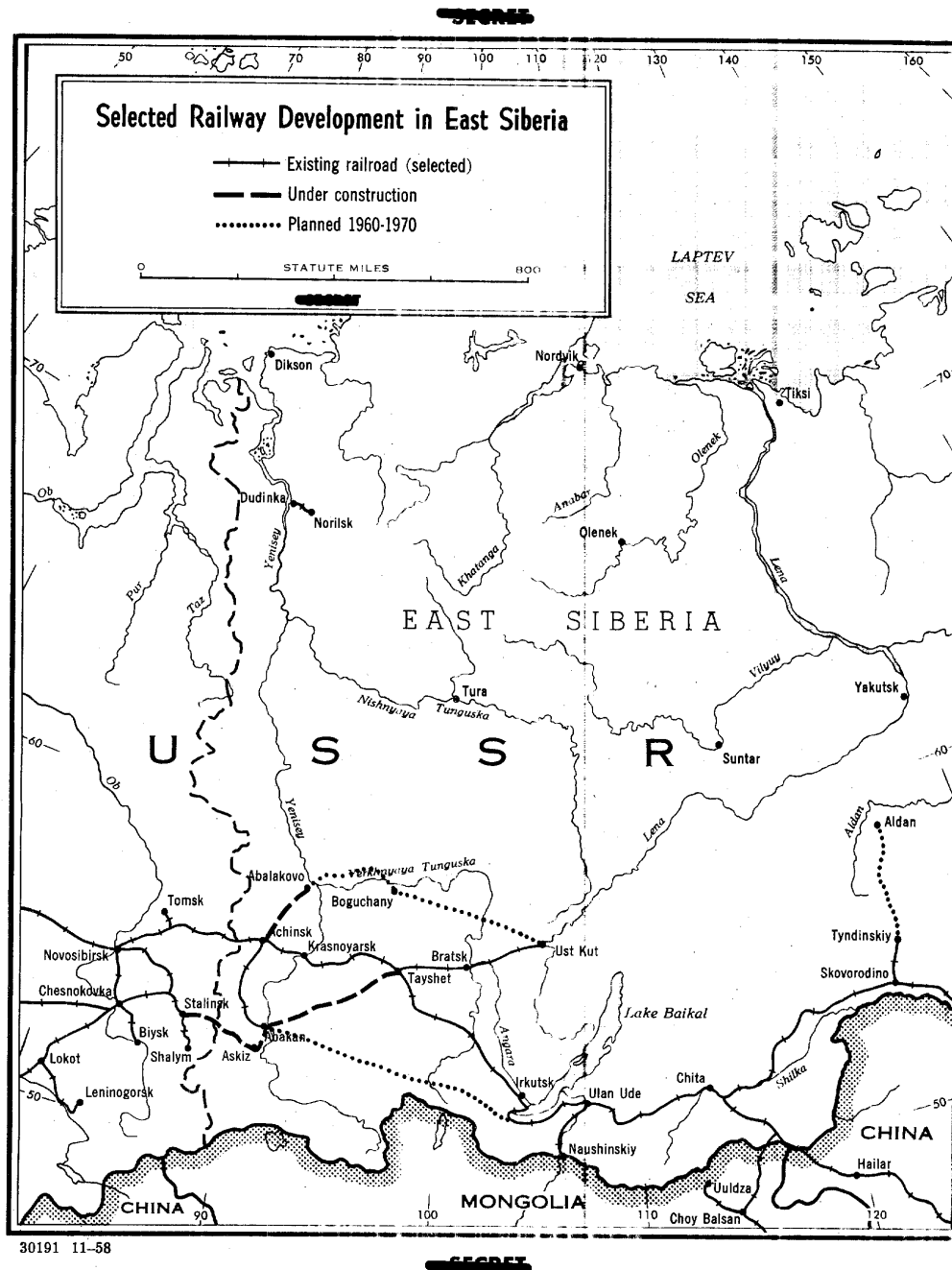
The Seven-Year Plan Theses do not provide any new information on railroad construction in this area.

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